

pH in skin and dog shampoo

All skin care products, including skin care products for animal, have a pH value. This value is essential to establish whether the product is harmful or not. In the past all soaps and shampoos had a high pH value. Today we know that all alkaline soaps are tough against skin and fur. Typical is the soft soap that has a pH above 10 and removes the important fat layer in the skin. In high concentration, these soaps will burn the skin.

Veterinarians and other dog experts have claimed that the dog shampoo should have the same pH as in the dog's skin, which is approximately 7.5. We have not found a scientific basis for this claim and there are several reasons why this is wrong:

- Shampoos with a pH of 7.5 removes fat from the skin and fur.
- Staphylococci, streptococci and other harmful bacteria that can cause skin problems grow best when the skin has a pH between 6 to 8. When the pH is below 4.5, and in the presence of organic acids, these bacteria can't survive, while many of the beneficial bacteria survive.
- Proteases are essential for many enzyme functions in the body. In normal skin there is a balance between the protease and the protease inhibitor. When skin problems and wounds develop, there has been an imbalance in this system; protease activity has become too high. This means that the cell structure will fall apart and thus makes it easier for the harmful bacteria to survive. Protease activity is controlled by pH. The activity is largest at a pH between 7 to 8.5. When the pH value is between 4 and 4.5, this activity is strongly reduced.

Based on these facts, it is logical that dog shampoos (and other skin care agents) should not have a pH of 7.5. A skin care agent with a pH of 4 is beneficial for all three points above. This is especially important for dogs with skin problems, but to prevent such skin problems, it is indeed important for all dogs.

Magne Skjervheim, veterinarian Optima products as



Daisy in Kristiansand is one of many dogs with skin problems, which has responded very positively to skin wash and skin care with a pH of 4.